

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1 (canceled).

2 (currently amended).      A cutting tool subassembly for a folding hand tool,  
comprising:

- (a) a jaw having a base;
- (b) a blade assembly, including a blade carrier having a tang and a sharpened cutter mounted removably on said blade carrier;
- (c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said blade carrier, said jaw and said blade carrier being movable relative to each other about said blade pivot joint;
- (d) a first handle connected to said base of said jaw by a first handle pivot joint and movable about said first handle pivot joint between an extended, operative position and a folded position with respect to said jaw; and
- (e) a second handle connected to said tang of said blade carrier by a second handle pivot joint and movable about said second handle pivot joint between an extended, operative position and a folded position with respect to said blade carrier, ~~The subassembly of claim 1 and~~ wherein said second handle includes an abutment face at an end thereof adjacent said second handle pivot joint, and wherein said tang includes a main portion in a first plane and a leg extending laterally from said main portion in a second plane normal to said first plane, said leg being aligned with said abutment face and resting against said abutment face when said second handle is in said extended operative position.

3 (previously presented). The subassembly of claim 2 wherein said second handle includes a channel having a pair of side walls and a base interconnecting said side walls and defining said abutment face.

4 (currently amended). The subassembly of claim ~~1~~ 2 wherein said jaw is a bypass support jaw and said cutter is a bypass cutting blade arranged to cooperate with said jaw, and wherein said cutting tool is a pruning shear.

5 (currently amended). The subassembly of claim ~~1~~ 2 wherein each of said handles defines a respective channel having a pair of channel side walls, said channels facing inwardly toward each other when said handles are in their folded positions and facing outwardly apart from each other when said handles are in their extended positions with respect to said jaw and said blade, and wherein each of said side walls of one of said handles includes cushioning portions of an elastomeric material overlying and extending along a margin thereof so as to cover said margin and present said elastomeric material along said margin for comfortable contact with a user's hand.

6 (original). The subassembly of claim 5 wherein one of said channel side walls includes a supporting portion of metal and a molded shell layer of a rigid thermoplastic material attached thereto, and wherein said cushioning portions are molded over said shell layer.

7 (original). The subassembly of claim 5 wherein said cushioning portions are molded onto said margins of said side walls.

8 (currently amended). The subassembly of claim ~~1~~ 2 wherein said blade pivot joint includes a tension screw and a locknut adjustably engaged therewith, said tension screw and locknut being arranged to keep said blade assembly and said jaw suitably closely alongside each other.

9 (currently amended). A cutting tool subassembly for a folding hand tool,  
comprising:

- (a) a jaw having a base;
- (b) a blade assembly, including a blade carrier having a tang and a sharpened cutter mounted removably on said blade carrier, ~~The subassembly of claim 1 wherein~~ said sharpened cutter ~~includes~~ including a hook portion at an outer end thereof, said hook portion facing openly away from said jaw and having a throat including a sharpened edge;
- (c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said blade carrier, said jaw and said blade carrier being movable relative to each other about said blade pivot joint;
- (d) a first handle connected to said base of said jaw by a first handle pivot joint and movable about said first handle pivot joint between an extended, operative position and a folded position with respect to said jaw; and
- (e) a second handle connected to said tang of said blade carrier by a second handle pivot joint and movable about said second handle pivot joint between an extended, operative position and a folded position with respect to said blade carrier.

10 (currently amended). A cutting tool subassembly for a folding hand tool,  
comprising:

- (a) a jaw having a base;
- (b) a blade assembly, including a blade carrier having a tang and a sharpened cutter mounted removably on said blade carrier;
- (c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said blade carrier, said jaw and said blade carrier being movable relative to each other about said blade pivot joint;
- (d) a first handle connected to said base of said jaw by a first handle pivot joint and movable about said first handle pivot joint between an extended, operative position and a folded position with respect to said jaw; and

(e) a second handle connected to said tang of said blade carrier by a second handle pivot joint and movable about said second handle pivot joint between an extended, operative position and a folded position with respect to said blade carrier. ~~The subassembly of claim 1,~~ said jaw defining a cavity surrounding said blade pivot joint and a groove extending away from said cavity, and said subassembly including a spring located within said cavity, said spring having a pair of opposite ends, a first of said opposite ends extending into said groove and thereby being engaged with said jaw, and the other of said opposite ends extending from said cavity to said second handle pivot joint and thereby being engaged with said tang of said blade carrier, and said spring urging said jaw and said blade assembly to pivot apart from each other about said blade pivot joint.

11 (currently amended). The subassembly of claim ~~1,~~2, including a blade safety lock carried on one of said ~~handles~~ handle pivot joints and movable between an engaged position in which said blade safety lock engages one of said jaw and said blade assembly and thereby holds said jaw in a closed position with respect to said blade assembly, and a disengaged position in which said jaw and said blade assembly are free to move between said closed position and an open position, said blade safety lock being arranged with respect to one of said handles so that said one of said handles urges said blade lock into said engaged position when said one of said handles approaches said folded position thereof.

12 -14 (canceled).

15 (currently amended). A subassembly for a folding hand tool, comprising:

- (a) a jaw having a base;
- (b) a blade defining a blade plane and including a blade base assembly having a tang;

- (c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said blade, ~~assembly~~, said blade ~~assembly~~ being movable about said blade pivot joint with respect to said jaw between an open position and a closed position;
- (d) a first handle ~~attached to said tang, said first handle~~ including an abutment face;
- (e) a second handle attached to said base of said jaw;
- (f) a first handle pivot joint interconnecting said first handle with said tang ~~blade assembly~~, said first handle being movable about said handle pivot joint between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said blade; ~~assembly~~; and
- (g) a leg extending laterally from said tang in a plane normal to said blade plane and engaged against said abutment face when said first handle is in said extended position.

16 (currently amended). The subassembly of claim 15 wherein said ~~second~~ first handle includes a channel having a channel base and a pair of side walls, and wherein said abutment face is a part of said channel base and said leg extends along and in contact with said abutment face when said ~~second~~ first handle is in said extended position.

- 17 (currently amended). A subassembly for a folding hand tool, comprising:
- (a) a jaw having a base;
  - (b) a blade ~~assembly~~ having a generally planar tang;
  - (c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said blade, ~~assembly~~, said blade ~~assembly~~ being movable about said blade pivot joint with respect to said jaw between an open position and a closed position;
  - (d) a first handle ~~attached to said tang, said first handle~~ including an abutment face and including a channel having a channel base and a pair of side walls, said abutment face being a part of said channel base;
  - (e) a second handle attached to said base of said jaw;

- (f) a first handle pivot joint interconnecting said first handle with said tang, ~~blade assembly~~, said first handle being movable about said handle pivot joint between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said blade; ~~assembly~~; and
- (g) a leg extending from said tang, ~~and engaged against said abutment face when said first handle is in said extended position~~, said tang being oriented parallel with one of said side walls of said channel and said leg extending laterally from said tang and being parallel with said channel base and extending along and being engaged against and in contact with said abutment face when said first handle is in said extended position.

18 (currently amended). The subassembly of claim 17 wherein said tang of said blade ~~assembly~~ and said leg are included in a single piece of sheet metal and said leg is formed by being bent out of a portion of said single piece located in a plane oriented at an appropriate angle to a plane including said tang to align said leg with said abutment face.

19 (currently amended). The subassembly of claim 15 wherein said ~~second~~ first handle includes a channel having a pair of side walls and a channel base defining said abutment face, and wherein said tang includes a main portion and said leg extends laterally at an angle away from said main portion and is aligned with said abutment face and rests against said abutment face when said ~~second~~ first handle is in said extended position.

20 (currently amended). A subassembly for a folding hand tool, comprising:

- (a) a jaw having a base;
- (b) a blade including a tang;
- (c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said blade;
- (d) a first handle connected to said base of said jaw by a first handle pivot joint and movable about said first handle pivot joint between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said jaw;

- (e) a second handle connected to said tang of said blade by a second handle pivot joint and movable about said second handle pivot joint between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said blade; and
- (f) wherein said handles define channels having channel side walls, said channels facing~~directed~~ inwardly toward each other when said handles are in their respective folded positions and ~~directed~~facing outwardly apart from each other when said handles are extended with respect to said jaw and said blade, and wherein each of said side walls of one of said handles includes cushioning portions of elastomeric material attached thereto, ~~extending along and~~ said cushioning portions covering at least part of a respective margin of each of said side walls and facing outwardly when said handles are extended, so as to provide cushioning of said margins of said side walls for a user's hand gripping said handle.

21 (original). The subassembly of claim 20 wherein said cushioning portions are overmolded onto said side walls of said channel.

22 (currently amended). A cutting tool subassembly for a folding hand tool, comprising:

- (a) a jaw having a base;
- (b) a blade having a tang and a sharpened edge;
- (c) a blade pivot joint interconnecting said jaw with said blade, said jaw and said blade being movable relative to each other about said blade pivot joint;
- (d) a first handle connected to said base of said jaw by a first handle pivot joint and movable about said first handle pivot joint between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said jaw;
- (e) a second handle connected to said tang of said blade by a second handle pivot joint and movable about said second handle pivot joint between an extended position and a folded position with respect to said blade; and

- (f) said jaw defining a cavity surrounding said blade pivot joint and a groove extending away from said cavity, and said subassembly including a spring located within said cavity, said spring having a pair of opposite ends, a first of said opposite ends extending into said groove and thereby being engaged with said jaw, and the other of said ends extending from said cavity to said second handle pivot joint and thereby being engaged with said tang of said blade, and said spring urging said jaw and said blade to pivot apart from each other about said blade pivot joint.

23 (previously presented). A handle for a folding multipurpose tool, comprising:

- (a) an elongate metal channel member having a base and a pair of side walls each having an elongate margin spaced apart from said base;
- (b) a shell layer of a rigid plastics material attached to an exterior surface of one of said side walls of said pair of said channel members; and
- (c) a cushioning portion attached to said shell layer and extending along and covering at least a portion of said elongate margin of said one of said side walls.

24 (original). The handle of claim 23 wherein said shell layer extends along said base and both of said side walls of said pair.

25 (original). The handle of claim 23 wherein said shell layer extends along said elongate margin of said one of said side walls of said pair.

26 (original). The handle of claim 23 wherein said cushioning portion is of an elastomeric material and extends along an outer margin of said shell layer.

27 (original). The handle of claim 23 wherein said cushioning portion covers a portion of an outer face of said shell layer and a portion of an outer margin of said shell layer.